

BEATON OF ROSSKEEN

(1678—1754)

A FAMOUS SON OF SKYE

BY

REV. DONALD MACKINNON, F.S.A., (Scot).,

PORTREE.

WITH

A PREFATORY NOTE

BY

PROFESSOR DONALD MACLEAN, D.D., Edinburgh.

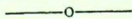
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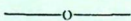
PREFATORY NOTE.



Every new addition to our knowledge of the ecclesiastical, religious and social life of the Highlanders of the past should be cordially welcomed by all those, and they are many, to whom the History of the Highland people makes a strong appeal. This interesting and informative booklet, sufficiently documented and grounded on intimate knowledge of the subject with which it deals, should therefore be warmly received not only by loyal Skymen, but by general readers outside that favoured Island. The "Beatons of Skye"—whether their origins were in Mull or in Fife is immaterial here—have contributed so largely to the cultured life of our country, and played their part in so many useful spheres, that this careful study of the expansion of the family from their traditional island home, now given to the public, should be a source of enlightenment and pride even to those who are steeped in Highland lore and need no stimulus to their racial enthusiasm.

D. MACLEAN.

BEATON OF ROSSKEEN.



THE BEATONS OF SKYE.

Daniel Beaton was a native of Skye. He was descended from a family of Beatons, who were for many generations hereditary physicians to the Macdonalds and the Macleods of Skye. The Skye Beatons, or Bethunes as they are sometimes called, trace their origin to a Fife-shire family of Beatons. Doctor Peter Beaton of Pitlochry, son of John Beaton Esquire of Balfour, Fife, uncle of Cardinal Beaton of St. Andrews, came to Skye, on the invitation of the Macdonalds and the Macleods, from Argyll-shire, where he had been practising as a doctor. He settled in Skye about the middle of the sixteenth century, and had a large family, members of which formed matrimonial connections with the best families in the Isles.

The late Professor Donald Mackinnon of Edinburgh University writing in the "Caledonian Medical Journal" for July, 1902, finds it difficult to accept the Fife origin of the Skye Beatons, which is given with "great circumstantiality" in a family history, entitled "An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Bethunes of the Island of Sky." He thinks that the Skye Beatons, and the Islay and Mull Beatons are one and the same family. There is no reason why one should doubt the Fife-shire descent of the Skye family as recorded in the Beaton History.

Of Dr. Peter's numerous descendants, not a few distinguished themselves in the professions. The Medical Profession, the Army, and the Church have all found exponents from the ranks of this family. The study of Medicine claimed the largest share of all, and made the Beatons famous throughout the Highlands and Western Isles.

It may not be amiss to refer to one or two of the more eminent members—medical, martial, and clerical, of this family.

Dr. Angus Beaton, grandson of Dr Peter, the first of the Beaton dynasty to settle in Skye, was a noted physician. To him we are indebted for a very valuable Gaelic Medical M.S. entitled "*Lilium Medicinæ*." The Rev. Thomas Whyte of Liberton, the Author of the "*History of the Bethunes*" informs us that this work contains "many curious discoveries concerning the nature of diseases and their cures." The copy of the "*Lilium Medicinæ*," which belonged to Dr. Farquhar Beaton (Fearchar Lighiche) of Husabost, in the parish of Duirinish, was presented in 1784 by the Rev. Donald Macqueen, M.A., D.D., F.S.A. (Scot.), minister of Kilmuir, to the Society of Antiquaries, and may be seen in their Museum in Queen Street, Edinburgh.¹ There are other Beaton Medical MSS. in existence, which prove that the Beaton physicians studied and practised Medicine in a scientific way. Perhaps the most famous of them all was Dr. Neil Beaton, greatgrandson of Dr. Angus of the "*Lilium Medicinæ*." He is mentioned by Martin Martin in his book, "*Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*" (1703). Neil was forty years of age before he "appeared" as a doctor. He was such a successful physician, and his cures were so effective that it was said he was in league with the evil one.

The military service of the Beatons will not compare with that of other Skye families, such as the Macdonalds, the Macleods or the Mackinnons. The Beatons were not a fighting race. Farquhar Beaton, grandson of Dr Angus of the "*Lilium Medicinæ*" was present at the Battle of Worcester on 3rd September, 1651, where one thousand "brave sons of Skye," commanded by Roderick Macleod of Talisker, and Norman Macleod of Bernera, sons of Ruairaidh Mor, 13th Chief of Dunvegan, fought with "desperate valour."² Almost all of them were either killed or taken prisoners and transported to America. The

Macleod brothers and Farquhar Beaton escaped with their lives. After the Restoration, the Macleods had the honour of Knighthood conferred upon them, the only reward, which King Charles was able or willing to give, them. At Worcester Farquhar "behaved gallantly and procured fame," and Norman Macleod of Bernera "conceived such a high opinion of him as made him continue always friendly to him, and his son after him." ³ Farquhar was the grandfather of the subject of this brief memoir.

Among the distinguished ministerial members of the Beaton family may be mentioned the Rev. John Beaton of Bracadale, who was a cousin of the celebrated Dr. Neil, and the Rev. John Bethune, D.D., of Dornoch, who was a son of the Rev. John Beaton of Glenshiel, and a grandson of Mr Angus Beaton, Tacksman of Dun an Eilthirich, near Dunvegan. Mr Beaton of Bracadale died in 1707, "much regretted." He was the first minister in Skye to dispense the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the Protestant way. In the "History of the Bethunes," he is described as "an able divine and a learned physician." Dr Bethune was minister of Harris, before his translation to Dornoch. He was a cultured and an erudite gentleman, but like the majority of the clerical sons of Skye, he belonged to the class of ministers known as "moderate." This is Sage's estimate of Dr Bethune as a man, scholar and preacher. "Dr. Bethune was an elegant classical scholar, a sound preacher, and one of the most finished gentlemen I ever remember to have seen. His manners were so easy and dignified that they would have graced the first peer of the realm, and his English sermons, which he always read, were among the neatest compositions I ever heard. In preaching in the Gaelic language, he used very full notes, as his mind was of that very highly-intellectual character that it could not submit to, nor indeed be brought to work in, mere extempore or unconnected discussions. With all his other qualifications, he had a delicate sense of propriety, and from anything, even the slightest word,

come from what quarter it might, that touched upon this terra sacra, he shrunk back as from something positively loathsome. He was a model Christian minister in the eye of the world; but with all his natural talents and acquirements, with all his orthodoxy and sentiment, and with his high sense of moral propriety, before the keen glance of Christian penetration, he sank at once to a much lower level. To the anxious, and sincere enquirer after truth, his sermons presented only a dreary prospect of cold and doubtful uncertainty." Dr Bethune had no evangelical leanings. His pulpit and parish were closed against Dr Macdonald of Ferintosh, and other Gospel Ministers. The Dornoch parishioners who hungered for the bread of Life crossed on Sabbath mornings to Tain, where the Rev. Angus Mackintosh, D.D., was exercising a living and gracious ministry. Dr. Bethune died in 1816. A brother was minister first of Harris and afterwards of Alness. His son, the Rev. Hector Bethune, M.A., succeeded his father as minister of Alness. He was afterwards translated to Dingwall, where he died in 1849. Mr Hector Bethune's son, who was an Episcopal minister in Durham, died only a few years ago.

THE SKEABOST FAMILY.

After Worcester, Farquhar Beaton returned to Skye. His relations advised him to enter into the "honourable estate of matrimony" and with that end in view he went "in suit of a daughter of Maclean of Coll." At Glenelg, on his way to Coll, Farquhar met a young lady, who won his heart, and went no further afield for a bride. His choice greatly displeased his friends, and the outcome of it all was that he left the Island, vowing never again to return "over the sea to Skye." He settled in Kintail, where he received land from the Earl of Seaforth.

Mrs Farquhar Beaton died soon after giving birth to a son. The father sent the child to Lord Lovat, in whose castle young Kenneth was brought up until

he was twenty-one years of age. Afterwards he lived with his father's friend, Sir Norman Macleod of Bernera. In course of time Kenneth came to Skye. The old jealousies, and family feuds were forgotten. A very friendly welcome was extended to young Kenneth Beaton, who planted himself among his relations at Skeabost, in the parish of Snizort.

Kenneth Beaton of Skeabost married Miss Anne Maclean of Duart in Mull. To them was born a large family of five sons and four daughters:—Daniel, John, Farquhar, Angus, Neil, Marion, Christian, Anne, and Mary. Of the sons four became ministers:—Daniel, Farquhar, Angus, and Neil.

Farquhar became the first Presbyterian minister of Croy, after the Revolution. Although he was sickly during the greater part of his life, he "interested himself in antiquarian and other pursuits." Presbyterian work, for many years after the Revolution, was something to daunt the bravest spirit. The Rev. Farquhar Beaton was on one occasion appointed by the Presbytery of Inverness to intimate a Presbyterial visitation of Daviot in the Church of Dunlichity. When Mr Beaton and a few of his parishioners, who accompanied him, arrived at Dunlichity, they met with a warm reception. "With some difficulty," reports Mr Beaton, "I gott access to the Church, and had no sooner began worshipec than by stones thrown in, the pulpit was broke about me, and some of my parishioners wounded. Being obliged to remove for our safety, we were assaulted by a multitude of men and women, with swords, staves, and stones, some of our number wounded, and others barbarously beaten."⁵

Although Mr Farquhar Beaton was thus cruelly treated, he and other members of the Presbytery of Inverness ventured again and again within the bounds of this troublesome parish, in order to confer with the parishioners about the planting of a Gospel minister among them, but in vain.

Mr Beaton was married to one of the Roses of Kilravock, a well known family in that part of the country. Their second son, John, became his uncle's

successor at Rosskeen. The Rev. Farquhar died on the 5th February, 1746. "His piety and Christian prudence," writes the Author of the "History of the Bethunes," "joined with the cheerfulness and humanity of his disposition, recommended him to the love and esteem of all his acquaintances."

The third clerical son, Angus, was minister of the Scots Congregation at Flushing, and was under call to Rotterdam, when he died in 1735.

Neil, the youngest son in Mr Beaton's levitical family, was never ordained to the pastoral charge of a Congregation. He died at Dunkeld about the year 1749.

Anne, the third daughter, was married to Farquhar, son of the famous Dr. Neil Beaton. Farquhar, like his father, was a doctor.

Mary, the youngest daughter in the Skeabost home, became the wife of a Mr William Scott, Merchant, and for some time a Magistrate, in Aberdeen. Their daughter, Anne, was married to William Urquhart Esquire of Meldrum. She died in the twenty-sixth year of her age, and soon after her death the following tribute appeared in the "Scots Magazine"—Vol. XIX, p. 202 :—

"To the memory of Anne Scott, Lady Meldrum,
In whose character the amiable qualities,
Of a wife, a mother, and a friend,
Were agreeably blended.

She was mild, affable, and cheerful,
Tender and affectionate,
Sensible, generous, and open.

In family concerns, a great economist;
Neither mean nor prodigal.
Her unaffected piety,

Equal temper,
And continual flow of spirits
Balanced the inconveniences
Of a delicate constitution

Gave a relish to life :

But could not prevent the stroke of death !

Reader !

Reflect upon the instability of human enjoyments,

Health is precarious; beauty but vain;

Riches have wings; our friends must die;

Virtue alone endureth forever."

After Mr William Scott's death, Mary Beaton married, as her second husband, Dr. James Dun, Principal Master in the Grammar School of Aberdeen. A daughter of this marriage became the wife of Dr. James Beattie, Professor of Logic and Moral Philosophy in Marischal College, Aberdeen.

THE EARLY MINISTERS OF SKYE.

Daniel, the eldest son of Mr Kenneth Beaton of Skeabost, was born in 1678, and was thus ten years of age at the Revolution. At that time, and for many years thereafter, Skye was a spiritual wilderness. The Reformation did not touch the Island as a spiritual movement. It was nothing more than a change from the profession of one creed to that of another, according to the views of the Macdonalds, the Macleods, the Mackinnons or the other leading families in the Island. The ministers, who occupied the pulpits of Skye during the boyhood of Daniel Beaton, were all natives of the Island, and had been with one exception, the former Episcopal incumbents.

Rev. Donald Macqueen, M.A., who was minister of Snizort at the Revolution, was sometime thereafter deprived of the living for not conforming to Presbyterianism. He was, however, allowed to remain in the parish until 1706, when his son, the Rev. Archibald Macqueen, M.A., became Presbyterian minister of Snizort. Mr Donald Macqueen was the second of four Macqueens, who in lineal succession served this parish, their combined ministries extending from 1642 to 1788. The most famous member of this levitical family was the Rev. Donald Macqueen, M.A., D.D., of Kilmuir, whose learning made a profound impression on Dr Johnson. Dr Macqueen was a grandson of the Revolution minister of Snizort. A great grandson of the minister of Kilmuir passed away last year (1925) in Edinburgh in the person of Captain George Bliss Macqueen, an Indian Veteran.

A relative of the Snizort Macqueens was minister of Sleat, the Rev. Angus Macqueen. He was

deprived of his Church and parish in 1694, but was permitted to remain in Sleat until 19th May, 1709. A daughter was married to John Macleod, the Macleod of Raasay, who entertained Dr Johnson, when he visited the Island in 1773. This Macleod was the uncle of the famous "Maighstir Ruairaidh," Free Church minister of Snizort. The Rev. Angus Macqueen was the great-great-grandfather of the late Rev. D. J. Martin of Stornoway and Oban.

The Rev. John Beaton, M.A., already noticed, was minister of Bracadale. He had been settled in this parish sometime before the Revolution. He was admitted into the Presbyterian Church about the year 1692.

Durinish and Strath were served by Rev. Dugald Macpherson, M.A., and Rev. Martin Macpherson, M.A., father and son. The Macphersons, like the Macqueens, were a clerical race. The minister of Durinish was received into the Presbyterian Communion by the Synod of Argyll about the year 1692. Mr Macpherson of Strath is described in the "Fasti" as "a good scholar, an able minister, and a mild, good natured, well bred gentleman." His son was the famous Dr John Macpherson, minister first of Barra, and afterwards of Sleat.

Mr Donald Nicolson was minister of Kilmuir. He was Chief of the Nicolsons of Scorrybreck. He deserted his charge in 1696, and died in the following year. His wife was an Aunt of Principal Robertson, the leader of the "moderate" party in the Church of Scotland of his day. Their son, Patrick, became minister of Kiltarlity. Another son was the last Episcopal minister of Stenscholl in Skye.

Although they were all able and scholarly ministers, they were not evangelically inclined, and the knowledge of the truth was not imparted by them to the people. The Scriptures were not in the possession of the few who could read. The only Bible in the parish of Sleat was the copy in the pulpit of the Church, and out of it the minister read a single verse as his text on Sabbath. Family worship was un-

known throughout the Island. The people were in gross darkness. According to one writer, "the Gospel was not preached in the Island before the year 1805, when Farquharson, one of the Haldane preachers visited the Island. This is not, however, historically correct. The Rev. Neil Macvicar of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, paid an annual visit to Lady Grange in the parish of Duirinish, during her imprisonment there. He preached to the people in the vernacular, and the last occasion on which he did so was in 1745, when a little girl was awakened. In the Booklet, "Strange Footprints of our King," the Rev. Donald Corbet of Kinlochbervie, tells the story of Mary Beaton. No one in her native Skye could give her information as to how she could become acquainted with "Jehovah" to whom it belongs "to rescue fully from death." From her home in Waternish, she wandered to Inverness where she at last found rest in the knowledge of God. The first Skye parish minister to declare the Gospel fully and freely was the Rev. Donald Martin, M.A., of the Martins of Duntulm and Beallock, minister of Kilmuir from 1785 to 1808. The spot near Uig is still pointed out, where Farquharson was preaching from John X.9—"I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture," when the Rev. Donald Martin, who happened to be passing that way, was attracted by the large crowd of people assembled in the open air, turned aside to hear, and heard to the saving of his soul. This was the beginning of better days for Skye.

DANIEL BEATON AT ABERDEEN.

It is not known how the young Beatons of Skeabost, in such dark surroundings, came under the influence of the truth; how they were attracted to and won for Christ, and were led to become preachers of the Gospel. Their mother, brought up in Argyllshire, among the friends of the Covenanting Cause, may have carried the Light of the Evangel to dark

Skeabost, and influenced her family in a gracious manner. When students at Aberdeen, the Beaton lads, would, no doubt, come in contact with evangelical religion. Three years before Daniel Beaton left his home in Skye for the Aberdeen Grammar School, the Rev. Thomas Blackwell was translated from Paisley to St. Nicholas Church, Aberdeen. Mr Blackwell, who was soon afterwards appointed Professor of Divinity in, and finally Principal of Marischal College, was a great evangelical force in the town. He was a tower of strength to true religion, "amid the general departure of the ministers of Aberdeen from the doctrines of the Westminster Confession." ⁷ From the teaching and preaching of his Professor, Daniel Beaton would derive much spiritual good, and obtain much valuable counsel to guide him in his future pastoral work. Of this much we can be certain, that Mr Beaton's conversion took place before 1711; in that year he is recommended to the Presbytery of Inverness as a "pious young man, able to preach in Gaelic." ⁸

The future minister of Rosskeen was educated at the Grammar School, and Marischal College. At the latter, he held the Rolland Bursary (1703-1707). The Rev. Hew Scott in the "Fasti" says that Mr Beaton took his degree at Aberdeen, but there is no record of his graduation. He was a distinguished student. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Aberdeen in 1711. ⁹

Soon after receiving license, Mr Beaton was invited by the Presbytery of Inverness to labour within their bounds. He accepted their invitation, and appearing before the Court, produced certificates of good conduct. ¹⁰ He was appointed to labour at Moy and Kirkhill, which he did with much acceptance for about two years.

ARDERSIER.

The parish of Ardersier, although in Morayshire, was at the Restoration and for more than one hundred years thereafter, one of the parishes included in

the Presbytery of Chanoury in the Synod of Ross. This parish is famous in the Annals of the Covenanters of Ross, as being one of the six parishes whose ministers were not found wanting in the day of trial in 1662. Mr John MacCulloch, the minister of Ardersier, suffered for conscience' sake along with Mr Thomas Hogg of Kiltearn, Mr Mackillican of Fodderty, Mr Andrew Ross of Tain, Mr Thomas Ross of Kincardine, and Mr Hugh Anderson of Cromarty. Of this noble band, only two:—Messrs MacCulloch, and Anderson were living when in 1693 the Presbytery of Ross was re-constituted. Owing to ill-health, however, Mr MacCulloch had demitted his charge before the resuscitation took place.

John Dallas, who had been the Episcopal minister of Ardersier before the Revolution, was intruded soon after MacCulloch left. He died about 1693. Lachlan Macbean, one of the many Episcopalian ministers, who turned their coat, was settled in Ardersier in 1695, but was deposed for immorality in 1706. For one year, 1707-1708, the Rev. Hugh Campbell, afterwards of Kiltearn, was minister of the parish. "

For several years after Mr Campbell's translation Ardersier was vacant, owing to a dispute among competing claimants for the patronage of the parish. Matters came to a crisis in the autumn of 1713. At a meeting of the Presbytery of Chanoury on the 18th August of that year, Sir Archibald Campbell of Clunes, and Mr John Calder, minister at Calder, (Cawdor) appeared, and presented a letter directed to the Presbytery from Sir Hugh Campbell of Cawdor, (sole heritor) bearing that he had sent enclosed a presentation to the parish of Ardersier in favour of Mr Daniel Beaton, Preacher of the Gospel in the bounds of the Presbytery of Inverness, adding that he knew no other Probationer that would be acceptable to the people or to him. The Presbytery, taking into consideration that the right of Presentation had devolved on them, and having a Presbyterial call to Mr Robert Thomson, Preacher of the Gospel, thought it would be

a great hardship on Mr Thomson, if they now demanded it back, unless he agreed to it. Sir Hugh had no right to present or submit any name, seeing that the right had devolved on them. Besides, the Earl of Cromarty, who claimed the right to present also, would give trouble, if they accepted Sir Hugh's Presentation. They therefore decided that the Presentation should be returned to him, and that he should be told that it was through his fault the parish had been so long vacant. The Presbytery were still willing to settle Mr Beaton, if Sir Hugh gave up any right he had to present, and agreed to have him settled on the Presbyterial Call.

Sir Hugh Campbell's reply to the Presbytery was to the effect that neither he nor the people would accept Mr Thomson. He peremptorily ordered the Presbytery to settle Mr Beaton among them without delay. Then a petition came from the parishioners of Ardersier saying that they had heard Mr Beaton preach, and had also good accounts of him. They were well satisfied with his qualifications. At the same time a letter was presented, signed by Mr Robert Baillie, and Mr William Stuart, ministers of Inverness, expressing their consent to the settlement of Mr Beaton at Ardersier. Mr Beaton, would accept, on no account, until Mr Thomson had agreed to retire. If, however, a Call by the Congregation was presented to him, and "if outward providence concurred and his mind should be determined, he would not fight against God." Mr Thomson would not retire, and the matter was referred to the Synod. The Synod, having taken into consideration that the sole heritor and the people were unanimous, and that they had received very satisfying accounts of Mr Beaton, who was certified by the Presbytery of Inverness to be of good character, and a distinguished student of Aberdeen University, advised the Presbytery to give him a Call.¹²

In due course, Mr Beaton received the Call from Ardersier. It would appear, that he welcomed the Ardersier Call, as a way of escape from accepting a

Call presented to him by the Parishioners of Moy, where he had been labouring as Probationer. On the 28th April, 1713, the Presbytery of Inverness had called Mr Beaton "jure devoluto" to be minister of the vacant charge of Moy and Dalarossie.¹³ Difficulties were cropping up daily, and the atmosphere was becoming thick with Jacobitism. Mr Beaton knew that sooner or later the Mackintosh, who had become a Jacobite, would come in conflict with the Presbyterians, who were staunch supporters of the Revolution Settlement, and was afraid to meet the coming storm. He entreated the Presbytery, at meeting after meeting, not to urge him as "he has no clearness as yet to accept the Call" to Moy.¹⁴ At length the Ardersier Call came, and Mr Beaton gladly accepted same. He was ordained and inducted at Ardersier on the 24th September, 1713. Mr Campbell of Kiltearn, his predecessor at Ardersier, preached in the Irish (Gaelic) language from 2 Cor. V: 20, and Mr Robert Finlay of Rosemarkie preached in English from Acts XX: 28.¹⁵

We have no authentic account of Mr Beaton's work, when minister of this parish, but from what we know of his work elsewhere, we believe that he would have laboured in Ardersier during his ministry of four years with zeal and faithfulness. The Presbytery Records shew that he was very unhappy there, and carried on his work under very straitening circumstances. On the 8th of January, 1717, he petitioned the Presbytery of Chanoury for an Act of Transportability to any charge within the Church of Scotland, "requiring a minister having the Irish language," his reasons being that he had not a sufficient legal competency to live by, and maintain his family; his stipend was only "2 chalders of victual and the Vicarage teinds which were worth £26 Scots"; he lived two "long" miles from a peat moss and could not afford to keep a horse to carry his peats. Sir Hugh Compbell, who was so anxious to have Mr Beaton settled at Ardersier, would do nothing. Meanwhile a Call came to him from Lath-

eron in Caithness. The Presbytery refused to transport Mr Beaton thither. Almost at the same time, he received a Call from Rosskeen. Latheron would not give him up, and resolved to appeal to the Assembly. Sir Hugh and others wanted to continue the starving process, and keep him at Ardersier, but the Presbytery were firm and determined to transport Mr Beaton to Rosskeen, where he was admitted in due course.¹⁶

Mr Beaton was appointed Clerk to the Presbytery of Chanonry in the year in which he was planted in Ardersier. The Rev. A. J. Macdonald of Killearnan writes:—"his minutes are models of neatness, signing his name at the bottom of each page."

ROSSKEEN.

It was in 1563 that the Light of the Gospel broke through the spiritual darkness of Ross-shire. The General Assembly of that year appointed Mr Donald Munro, the minister of Kiltearn, formerly High Dean of the Isles to be "Commissioner of Ross." "The Lord came with him to his work," wrote Dr Kennedy of Dingwall, and before many years had passed the Cause of religion had made much progress in Easter Ross. In 1754 ten ministers, and twenty-five Readers were labouring in Ross-shire. The County was divided into districts each containing several charges. The district, which included the parishes of Nonakiln, Rosskeen, Kinçardine, Kilmuir and Logie, was supplied by Rev. William Ross Thomson, having under him Mr William Munro, nephew of Donald, High Dean of the Isles, as Reader for Nonakiln and Rosskeen, the two parishes into which the now extensive parish of Rosskeen, was divided in pre-Reformation times, and for one hundred and fifty years after the Reformation.

During the dark days of Episcopacy (1660-1688), not much is known of the state of religion in Rosskeen, or in the neighbouring parishes. A very sad set-back was given by the Restoration to the Cause of Evangelical religion in these parts. When the country

in 1688 emerged from Episcopacy, we find the people of Easter Ross grossly ignorant and superstitious. Mr James Michael, born in 1694, and who died in 1797, often told that when a boy he saw the people of Ardross bringing loads of wood to Nonakiln on the Sabbath on which the Curate preached there, and that after the service these loads were bought and sold. This disgraceful custom was entirely done away with as the power of the Gospel increased. "It is refreshing to read in Wodrow's History that one man, at least, in Rosskeen, was of such firm principle as to suffer to the spoiling of his goods for conscience sake. Walter Innes Esquire of Inverbreakie, near Invergordon, was, in 1662 fined £2400 Scots for non-conformity to Episcopacy. Walter was a remarkable man of prayer. Mackenzie, the Clan Historian, in his "History of the Monros" gives the following Rosskeen tradition about him. Sir George Munro of Newmore, the great-grandfather of "Lady" Newmore, who was the intimate friend of the subject of this biographical sketch, was one of Gustavus Adolphus' Generals in the Austrian Wars. After the Battle of Nordlingen, when the combined Army of Scots and Swedes were defeated by the Austrians, Sir George Munro returned home. On his arrival at Newmore, he sent for Walter Innes. "Upon Walter's appearance at Newmore Castle, George Munro asked the godly man, where he was, and what he had been doing on a certain date which he named. Walter at first could not remember, but after some consideration, he said he was engaged all that day in his barn praying to God to protect Newmore on the battlefield, and bring him scathless out of the conflict. 'I thought you were so engaged, my good man,' said Newmore, 'as all through that day, in whatever direction I turned in giving the command, and directing the Battle I saw you as it were in person before me shielding me from danger, and thank God, he has answered your prayers, and I have returned home safely and unhurt!'

The outstanding event in the history of the parish of Rosskeen in Episcopal times, was the celebration of

the Lord's Supper within its bounds by some of the Covenanting Ministers. So far as is known, the dispensation of the Sacrament of the Supper at Obsdale on a fine September day in 1675, stands alone, as the only occasion on which that solemn ordinance was administered in Ross-shire, and in the North of Scotland, by the Covenanters, if we except the Communion held by the Rev. George Squair, an outed minister from Warwick-shire, in an isolated spot among the wild hills of Eadrachilles in Sutherland.

At the Communion Services at Obsdale, Mr Mackillican of Fodderty was assisted by Mr Hugh Anderson of Cromarty, and Mr Alexander Fraser of Daviot. "There was such a plentiful effusion of the Spirit," writes Wodrow, "that the oldest Christians declared that they had not been witness to the like. The ministers engaged in this solemnity experienced a remarkable preservation, for a party of soldiers was sent by Sir Roderick Mackenzie of Findon to apprehend Mr Mackillican, who had rendered himself particularly obnoxious to those in power. Expecting that he would have dispensed the Sacrament at Alness, the place of his residence, the party came thither on the Lord's Day, and missing him, they fell a-pillaging his orchard, which kept them so long, that before they could reach Obsdale, the forenoon's work was over, and, upon notice given, the ministers retired. After the party went off, the ministers and people met again in the afternoon, and had no more disturbance." It was a great and memorable day. Showers of blessing fell. Many dated their conversion from that day. Let us state one case as given by Dr. Kennedy in "Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire." "A man, hitherto, careless about the state of his soul, had gone to that blessed meeting, impelled by mere curiosity, like the chief publican of old. The God of Zaccheus met him at Obsdale; and on his return from the meeting, one of his neighbours said to him, 'What a fool you were to have gone; you will suffer the loss of all your goods for what you have done.' 'You are more to be pitied,' he re-

plied, 'for not having been there; as for me, if the Lord would maintain in me what I hope I have won to, I would not only part with my cow and my horse, and these are my only earthly possessions, but with my head likewise if called to it.'

Bicentenary services of commemoration were held at the spot hallowed by such associations in September 1875, when Dr Kennedy, Dingwall, preached to a large assembly, the sermon being the 28th in the volume of his published sermons. In August, 1880, commemorative services were held near Alness Station, where Drs. Begg, Kennedy and Aird spoke to the thousands that had gathered from all parts of the Highlands. The outcome of these memorial services has been the erection of a granite monument, bearing an appropriate inscription.

At the Revolution, Mr William Mackenzie, the 4th and youngest son of William Mackenzie Esquire of Kildun, Dingwall, was Episcopalian minister of Rosskeen. He conformed to Presbytery, and continued in the parish, until his death on the 14th of March, 1714. Until that year, one minister had charge of the two churches—Nonakiln and Rosskeen, preaching in the latter on three Sabbaths, and in the former on the 4th Sabbath. In 1714, the Nonakiln Church fell during public worship. Many were injured, but none killed. From that day services were discontinued there.

To this parish, Mr Daniel Beaton was called "jure devoluto," by the Presbytery of Tain, on 24th January, 1717. He was inducted at Rosskeen, as the first Presbyterian minister of the parish on the 26th April of the same year. On the day of Mr Beaton's induction, if there was a full attendance of members of Presbytery, the following ministers would be seen in the Church of Rosskeen:—Mr Hugh Duff of Fearn; Mr Hector Fraser of Edderton; Mr Walter Ross of Kilmuir; Mr Hugh Munro of Tain; Mr George Munro of Nigg; Mr David Ross of Tarbat; and Mr John Balfour of Logie-Easter.

Of the most outstanding of these ministers, biographical sketches are given in "Religious Life in Ross," and in "The Days of the Fathers of Ross-shire." From these sources we give one or two anecdotes of Mr Beaton's most intimate associates among his Presbyterian brethren.

John Balfour was a native of Caithness. He was ordained at Logie Easter barely six months before Beaton came to Rosskeen. Of all the ministers of the Presbytery none was more eminent for piety, or more acknowledged of the Lord than "Maighstir Balfour Mor." He was translated to Nigg in 1728. The following account of Mr Balfour's death-bed, although well known, may be retold here. When on his death-bed, Mr Balfour was in great darkness and fear. His son, the Rev. George Balfour, Tarbat, visited him and asked him how he felt. "Very sad," he replied, "on the borders of despair. The only passage of Scripture present to my mind is, 'The wages of sin is death'" "True father," said the son, "but recall the other clause of the verse, 'The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord'" After a little while in quiet solemn meditation, he said, "It is the Lord, who sent you here to-day. Satan kept before my mind, the dark part of the verse which drove me almost to despair; but now blessed be the Lord, the bright section is presented to my mind, and God has by it dispelled my darkness, loosed my bonds, and given the liberty of his children." This comfort continued to the end.

Hector Fraser, Edderton, was a licentiate of the Presbytery of Linlithgow. He was ordained at Kin-cardine on 25th April, 1699. He was translated to Edderton in 1709. The following pleasing incident took place at Edderton on a Communion Sabbath in Mr Fraser's time. A gentleman sportsman came to the parish who, it would seem, had no great respect for the sanctity of the Lord's Day. On a certain Sabbath in the parish, this gentleman with entire disregard alike for the feelings of the community, and the sacredness of the hallowed day, went out to the hills

to enjoy his pastime. In the course of his peregrinations he came upon the Congregation, worshipping in the open air. He stood for a little gazing upon what was no doubt to him a novel sight. The service had by this time proceeded some length. The preacher had been well on with his sermon. The stranger little by little had his attention drawn to what was being said. He made up his mind to join the Congregation, sat down on the grassy sward, listened with increasing interest to the discourse, and was deeply impressed. When the Table Services began, he rose from his place, and came forward to where the minister was, and asked of him a token of admission. It was unusual to admit to the Lord's Table one who was a total stranger to the minister and elders. The minister found himself in an unpleasant fix, and did not well know what to do. The gentleman insisted, and informed the minister who he was, and related the change which he underwent during the sermon he had listened to. The impression made on the minister's mind was favourable. He believed there was ground to conclude that the man had become the subject of a saving change. He gave him a token of admission, and the man took his place at the Table. The fruits which followed amply proved that the minister had not done amiss. Evidence of a work of grace having been wrought upon him was evinced clearly and lastingly in his subsequent life.

Walter Ross of Kilmuir Easter was another of Mr Beaton's associates. He was a very pious man, and very zealous in the work of the ministry. He became minister of Kilmuir, his only charge, in 1715. He found the parish in a rude and barbarous condition. Here as in other Highland parishes at this time, the people were non-church going. Mr Ross devised many plans and exercised great pains and patience before the general body of the people were inured into church-going habits. One district of his parish was very incorrigible. Whenever he paid a visit to this locality, the inhabitants, who were fishers, took to their boats, and in this way eluded their mini-

ster. Ross was, however, up to them. He, accompanied by his church officer, and two or three carts, visited the village. The inhabitants to a man took to their boats. Mr Ross and his beadle entered the deserted houses, and bereaved them of all the cooking utensils they could lay their hands on, and deposited them in a building in the Churchyard. When the villagers returned to their homes, they found themselves in rather an uncomfortable position; they could prepare no food. At the end of two days, when the minister thought they had fasted long enough, he sent for them. Hunger forced them to face the minister, who received them very cordially. After they partook of a substantial repast, which he had provided for them, they promised never again to flee from him, and explained that their conduct resulted from the false impression the Curates gave them of the Presbyterian ministers. They got back their pots and pans, and became regular Church goers. Some of them, even before Mr Ross' death, showed by their walk and conversation that they had undergone a saving change. Mr Ross died in 1733, and his widow married Mr Beaton.

MINISTRY AT ROSSKEEN.

Mr Beaton found his new parish in a deplorable condition spiritually. Religion was at a very low ebb. Sabbath profanation prevailed everywhere within the parish. The education of the people had been utterly neglected. There were no teachers, and no schools in the parish. The Church and Manse were in a dilapidated condition. There were no elders. Even the necessary vessels and linen for the Communion were lacking. The state of things was such that at the end of his second year as minister, Mr Beaton was unable to report much improvement. From an account of a Presbyterial Visitation of Rosskeen in 1719, we get an idea of the condition of affairs there. "The minister being asked," the Report reads, "if he had an ordained eldership, replied that though he

has been travelling among his people for that purpose, he could not find as yet such a competent number qualified for that office as he could have freedom to ordain; but that some of the discreetest and most judicious in the parish do sit with him in Session and give their advice and assistance in the exercise of discipline. . . . The Presbytery having inquired if there was a schoolmaster in the parish, the minister replied that they have no school-master, or legal maintenance provided for a schoolmaster. . . . The Presbytery having inquired concerning the fabric of the Church, and the state of the Manse, the minister reported that he has two Churches in his parish, one at Rosskeen, and the other at Nonakiln; that the Church at Nonakiln was ruinous, but that the Church at Rosskeen was in fairly good condition, only that the thatch stands in need of some repair. The Manse has been lately repaired, and that methods are laid for making up what is wanting to complete the reparation thereof. . . . The Presbytery having inquired if the parish is provided with Communion cups and other utensils for the use of the Church, the minister reported that it is not. . . .”¹⁸

Mr Beaton set out at once to bring about a reformation in the parish. The great obstacle to religious and spiritual improvement in post-Revolution times was Sabbath desecration, which took the form of shinty playing in Rosskeen and other Highland parishes. Mr Balfour, Mr Æneas Sage of Lochcarron, Mr John Beaton of Glenshiel, and Mr Archibald Ballantyne of Lochbroom all found the people of their respective parishes addicted to the practice of the game on the Sabbath. Realizing that spiritual progress was impossible until this nefarious work was stopped, they resorted to devices which might in our day be regarded with suspicion. The minister of Glenshiel earned the sobriquet “ministair nan tunn” as he employed the “arguments of meat and drink” to effect the reformation, which the ministers of Lochcarron, Nigg and Lochbroom managed to bring about by the “hand or baton.”¹⁹

Rev. David Carment, a successor of Mr Beaton in the ministry of the parish of Rosskeen gives an interesting account of how the Sabbath playing of shinty was put down in this parish. "Rather more than a century ago," writes Mr Carment, "it was the practice for the people to meet at Ardross, in the heights of the parish, on Sabbath, to play at shinty. When Mr Beaton was settled as minister of the parish in 1717, this practice was one of the first things which caught his attention, and which he determined to put a stop to. The way he managed to do so was this: there was a certain man noted for activity and strength, who was the chief and leader of the shinty players. Mr Beaton sent for this man and proposed to make him an elder. The man was at first naturally not a little surprised at this proposal, but after some persuasion consented to it. Upon his being shortly afterwards duly called to be an elder, Mr Beaton informed him of the various duties connected with his new office, and that he was specially bound to put a stop to the shinty playing on the Sabbath. The man promised to do so, and accordingly on the next Sabbath repaired to the playing ground armed with a stout cudgel. He then declared to those assembled for their usual sport that if one of them dared to lift a shinty he should forthwith feel the weight of his cudgel. The players, it is said, thereupon quietly retired and never afterwards met again on the Lord's Day for a like purpose." ²⁰ This elder and many of his companions in folly became subjects of saving grace, and led useful and exemplary lives ever after. The transformation, wrought in the district of Rosskeen in which "the strong elder" and his once profane comrades lived, was so remarkable that Auchnacloch became known as "Nead nan Smeorach" (the nest of the thrushes), so full was it of persons, who praised God with their voices in public and private, and with the sweet music of a consistent life. There was scarcely a family in which one or two of its members were not under the power of grace. ²¹

Soon after his settlement, Mr Beaton began the

systematic visitation of the parish, and, as was customary in those days, brought his Church officer with him. The latter had rather a quick temper, somewhat gruff, and was in almost every respect the very opposite of the former. This is how they were to work. "It was arranged that the Church Officer should introduce the minister to the families visited, and make remarks deemed to be appropriate to the occasion. In cases where the families were not well conducted, and where things occurred that called for rebuke the beadle had full liberty to lay on the lash. When the beadle finished the minister was to follow, and to use meekness in speech and behaviour, and these indeed were his natural disposition and were congenial to him. In other words, the Church Officer was to represent the Law, and the minister the Gospel. Visitation began. In the first house entered, the minister, and his man found none but the 'good-wife.' The Church Officer, after shaking hands with her, and making one or two preliminary remarks, asked if she recognised the gentleman who was along with him. She replied in the negative. This was enough. He at once proceeded to rebuke her severely, pointing out that she must be a very indifferent person, since she did not recognise the parish minister, which was sufficient evidence that she did not attend Church, but lived like a pagan in the entire neglect of the means of grace. Before he finished, the poor woman trembled like an aspen leaf, and feared to open her lips in self-defence. At the close of the altercation the minister gently interposed, and spoke kindly, assuring the Church Officer that the next time she saw him (Mr Beaton) she would recognise him. Before leaving the house, the Church Officer observed some cabbages on a side table in the room in which they sat, and asked the lady of the house when she had brought them out of the garden. She answered that it was yesterday, which was the Sabbath. On hearing this, his anger knew no bounds, and he burst out in a flood of indignation which struck the house-wife with terror. The minister again

interposed and turning to the Church Officer, said that the woman did not know it was wrong to do what she had done, and that he felt sure she would not repeat her misconduct. By this time the woman began to regard the minister with kindly feelings, and looked to him with respect. At this juncture the 'goodman' entered, who had just returned from a journey. The Church Officer questioned him as to when he had left the house, where he had been, and what he had been doing. In reply he stated that he left home on the previous day, to attend the market held at Tain, where he had been disposing of some things he was in the habit of making, and selling to the farmers for the support of his family. On hearing the man's tale the Church Officer was furious, and rebuked him with tremendous severity for his open and gross profanation of the Sabbath Day. The minister again interposed, and spoke in a kindly winning tone, giving it as his opinion that the poor man did not know that his conduct in attending a market on the Lord's Day was improper, and stated that he hoped there would be no repetition of it, now that he was aware of the dishonour to God's law in the practice. The result was what might be expected, for human nature is more easily drawn than driven. The minister's soft attractive demeanour had its reward. Before he left the house, both the inmates promised to abandon their former habits and hence-forward to attend the public means of grace." ²²

On another occasion during the first pastoral visitation of his congregation, Mr Beaton entered an ale-house, called for some ale, and invited some men who were about at the time to share it with him. They were astonished at being so invited by the minister who, they all knew, was in the habit of severely condemning their drinking customs. However, they accepted the invitation and found the minister a far more agreeable companion than they anticipated, and became very fond of him, he was so kind and amiable. At length, he asked permission to read to them an interesting story to which they gladly consented. The

story was that of Joseph, his treatment by his brethren; his afflictions; his advancement in Egypt; the famine in Canaan; the abundance in Egypt; the journeys for food in Egypt; Joseph's cup found in Benjamin's sack, and Benjamin's imminent danger of being detained. At this part of the narrative, one of the men who had been rivetted by the whole of it, burst into tears and exclaimed, "What will become of the poor old man when he will be deprived of his boy; surely he cannot stand this!" So ignorant were they of Scripture that few of them knew of the story being in the Bible. Mr Beaton then took the opportunity of preaching the Gospel to them, making use of Joseph as an eminent type of Christ. The sermon so fascinated them that they promised to attend Church regularly, "if they would get such preaching as they had just received, it was so plain to their intellects, and so affecting to their hearts."²³

Mr Beaton thus energetically, faithfully and lovingly began, and carried on his ministry at Rosskeen. He had not to wait long for tokens that the Lord was with him.

REVIVAL.

During the eighteenth century, there were throughout the length and breadth of Scotland, many seasons of Revival, especially in the parishes in which ministers, thoroughly evangelical, were settled. The ministers of Easter Ross, and the surrounding districts had been longing for the salvation of their flocks, and when the Cambuslang and Kilsyth Revival "leapt the Grampians" that part was prepared for it.

The awakening took place in Rosskeen about the year 1742, twenty-five years after Mr Beaton's admission to the parish. His preaching was richly blessed almost from the beginning. "From 1721 until 1731," Mr Beaton himself reports in Robe's "Monthly History," "there was a pleasant appearance for good in the parish. "From the year 1732 to the year 1742 things were much at a stand, comparatively;

though during that space, one and one was engaged to the Lord." It was in the autumn of 1742, that the work began abruptly. "From the harvest of 1742 to Martinmass 1743, or thereby. . . . there came a surprising Revival and stir among the people; about the number of six and thirty men and women fell under a concern about their salvation during that period." Mr Beaton has left on record the texts that were "blest most for their awakening, drawing and encouraging." They were:—Hosea 13:13, "He is an unwise son, for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children"; Gal. 6:19, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you"; John 3:3, "Except a man be born again." He adds "especially the first of these subjects was the principal mean of the first stir."

A notable feature of this Revival was the good work done among the boys and girls of Rosskeen. In the winter of 1743, children between the ages of nine and fifteen, became concerned, holding meetings at which they engaged in prayer by turns, sang Psalms, and conferred on what they had been hearing in Church. "They keep strict discipline among themselves" wrote Mr Beaton to the "Monthly History," "and admit none into their society, but such as undertake to pray with them. At first some of the serious people of the place, hearing of it, came to over-hear them without their knowledge, who were greatly surprised and affected. . . . with their sound expressions, and the favour they found with them in prayer." The young people watched over each other's conduct with faithfulness and love; "their outward deportment" was "grave and quiet without any childish levity." ²⁴

For many years after the Revival, not a single breach of the Seventh Commandment was known to have occurred in Rosskeen. It is said that "the first instance that happened, produced such a sense of shame and sorrow that the people of the locality held meetings for humiliation and confession and sin." ²⁵

PRESBYTERIAL VISITATIONS.

Parochial visitations by the ministers of the Presbytery were common in the first quarter of the eighteenth Century. In the Records of the Presbytery of Tain, there are accounts of such visitations of the parish of Rosskeen. The first visitation in Mr Beaton's time took place in 1719, two years after his settlement in the parish, and is referred to on a former page. At this visitation Mr Beaton "preached in his ordinary, in Irish" from Luke 15:23, "And bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry"; and in English from John 7:37, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out," and "was approved."

In 1727 (22nd July) ten years after he became minister of Rosskeen, there was another visitation of the parish, this time "to inquire into the state of the parish—more especially in regard to the churches." We have already seen that the Nonakiln Church fell during public worship in 1714. The Rosskeen Church, was allowed to fall into disrepair during Mackenzie's incumbency. The heritors were now divided in opinion as to what should be done—whether to have Nonakiln Church rebuilt, and the Church of Rosskeen made water-tight, or have a new "kirk" in a central place that "would accommodate the whole parishoners." One of the heritors, Mr Colin Mackenzie of Kinncraig was opposed to "any reparation of the Kirk of Rosskeen except to render it water-tight with heather"; to "transporting" it to any other place in the parish, or to "building a kirk at Nonakiln." His reason for dissenting against the rebuilding of the Nonakiln Church was the following:—
 "The kirk of Nonakiln. . . . if tradition be allowed, as it may in this, though not in all other things, was first erected more out of ill-humour and petty schism among heritors of the parish—who would not come to one church—than any religious design, or real use for it; and now, seeing time has worn out the kirk

and the ill-humour that occasioned the erecting of it, it is hoped the Presbytery will not judge it proper to burden the parishioners against their inclinations with upholding that monument of Folly of their predecessors." The Presbytery, owing to the divided state of feeling among the heritors, delayed coming to a finding, but stated that "it would certainly be for the edification of the parish to have one central place of worship." It would appear that eventually the Rosskeen Church was enlarged to accommodate all the people, and the Nonakiln Church was not used again. Not until the time of Mr Carment was a new Church erected in Rosskeen. In 1833 the new Rosskeen Church was opened.

Four years before Mr Beaton's death, there was a Presbyterial visitation in connection with a witchcraft case, the details of which are given in full in "Church Life in Ross and Sutherland" (pages 199-206), and need not be repeated here.

ROSSKEEN WORTHIES.

There were no elders in the parish when Mr Beaton entered upon his work there or for some time after. He was unable to dispense the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for four years after his induction. Under the reign of prelacy, the Lord's Supper was seldom administered in the Highland parishes. The necessary vessels and linen cloths were often lacking, and when needed had to be borrowed. In the parish of Lochbroom, the Lord's Supper was only administered once in seven years; at Fodderty once in twelve; and in Glen Urquhart not once in twenty-four. ²⁶ After the Revolution, when evangelical ministers were settled, a change took place. Order was restored in the House of God, and the ordinances of His own appointment were reverently observed. We have seen that at the first Presbyterial visitation of Rosskeen two years after his admission, Mr Beaton informed the visiting brethren that "he could find none qualified for the office of elder." Soon, how-

ever, men suitable for the eldership were raised up. When some of these were chosen for the office, the Presbytery met at Rosskeen to examine them. Being fully satisfied as to their knowledge, they unanimously agreed to their ordination, and deputed Mr Beaton to announce the Presbytery's approbation to the nominees, who sat in another room. In doing so he added:—"When I came to the parish, my pony could have answered the questions put to you to-day just as well as you could have done." ²⁷ In 1721 Mr Beaton celebrated the Sacrament for the first time in Rosskeen and six or seven only communicated.

In Mr Beaton's time, there were many of "the excellent of the earth" the fruits of his own ministry, residing in this extensive and populous parish.

William Munro lived in the village of Millcraig in the early part of Mr Beaton's ministry. He had married a pious woman who was a great favourite of the minister. At that time, William Munro was very indifferent about his soul's salvation, although leading a decent life and walking circumspectly. He attended church regularly and after a time when the truth began to search his heart and conscience, he found that many of his practices were exposed and condemned every Sabbath from the pulpit by his minister. He became uneasy about this and at last concluded that some one must be informing the minister regarding his ways, but could not make out who it could be. The conclusion he arrived at, after thinking over the subject for a very long time was that it could be none other than his wife whom he loved so much. Her frequent visits to the Manse gave his conjecture plausibility. Every Sabbath he found his sins most minutely exposed, and he imagined that not only the minister's eye but every other eye in the church was upon him. He could stand it no longer and spoke to his wife, exhorting her to abstain from telling all his faults to the minister, or that otherwise they must separate. In vain did she deny having ever done such a thing as he suspected her of. Nothing could convince her husband that such minute and accurate

descriptions were possible on any other supposition. He thought it very bad of his wife to inform upon her own husband and considered it ill-breeding on the part of Mr Beaton to go on as he was doing, exposing him every Lord's Day before the whole congregation. As time went on, he found the workings of his heart, his principles of action, and his motives as clearly delineated and as forcibly condemned in the sermons, as his outward actions. This staggered him. He was convinced that his wife could give no information about these things and he was puzzled beyond measure to understand how the minister could so plainly speak of things which were only known to himself and to God. In the graphic words of Dr Aird, "wife and minister vanish, and he finds himself confronted by God alone, before whose eye all things are naked and open. His attention is arrested, his conscience is roused, his whole being quivers. The message of God is at first and for some time thereafter, one of terror because one of condemnation. He no longer accuses his wife, or his minister, but himself. Guilty and self-condemned, he falls down at the feet of sovereign mercy, waiting to be dealt with as it may seem good to the Lord. Humbled in spirit, he lies low beneath the feeling of self-loathing and self-abhorring; but the message of God is not one of unmixed condemnation. The penitent sinner finds mercy. After a season of spiritual darkness and soul anguish, faint rays of light began to break through the gloom. The lowering clouds rolled slowly away and the welcomed light entered his troubled soul, bringing comfort and peace to his agitated spirit. He is enabled to receive God's message of reconciliation through Christ by the application of the Holy Spirit." Mr Munro became a distinguished Christian and was ordained an elder by Mr Beaton.

After a few years, Mr Munro left the parish of Rosskeen for the adjoining parish of Kilmuir Easter, where he became an elder in Mr Porteous's congregation. He occupied the farm of Delny, which was the largest in that part of the country. To make his

farm complete and compact, two families were evicted from small lots adjoining the farm. It would appear that at the moment he did not realize what was involved in his being act and part with a plan that perpetrated an injury, or what his tender conscience afterwards interpreted to him as such. No sooner did he enter into possession than his conscience smote him for covetousness. He resolved to make restitution. After serious consideration of the whole case, he resolved to bring to his farm fifteen widows with their families and to support them. This he did, and it was his practice when his meal was brought from the mill to give each of the widows a share before any of it was set apart for family use. He delighted in hospitality and charitableness. On one occasion as he was engaged in a gratuitous distribution of oatmeal to some poor persons, a neighbour of his regarded as a pious man, but penurious, entered the meal-cellar, and addressed him to the following effect :—" Well, William, I stand in great fear of you, that by dispensing your means so lavishly you shall ruin yourself, leave your family destitute, and not only so, but do harm to others, and, above all cast a slur upon religion." " Well, friend," replied William, " I often fear that I may bring reproach on the cause of Christ, but not by any means in the way you have stated; for were I sure that I am actuated by a proper motive, viz :— love to God's command, and the glory of His name, these two hands would never weary of dispensing my means to the poor, nor would I be afraid of ruining myself or my family, or that I should be the means of injury to others." We are informed in " Religious Life in Ross " that Mr Munro's unfailing generosity did not diminish his means. He left considerable substance to his family. " There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth !"²⁸

Mr Munro was twice married. His first wife was a Miss Margaret Spence, a pious woman. By this marriage he had one son who died soon after receiving license to preach. He married secondly a Miss Murchison from the parish of Contin. The only

daughter of the second marriage, it is interesting to note, became the wife of Mr Alexander Fraser, "Bughty," Inverness, father of Provost John Fraser of Inverness, whose son was Dr Donald Fraser of the Free High Church, Inverness, and afterwards of Marylebone, London. A great-grand-son of William Munro was Excise Officer at Broadford, Skye. One of his daughters married the Rev. Alexander Fraser Russell, M.A., Free Church minister of Kilmodan. He was a son of the Rev. James Russell, minister of Gairloch, who remained "in" at the Disruption. The late Sir James Russell, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 1891-1894, was a son of the Kilmodan minister, and a great-great-grand-son of William Munro.

Another of the Rosskeen "men" was John Ross MacConnachie. He resided at Strathrusdale upwards of twelve miles from the church, but was invariably one of the first at church on Sabbath morning. This led to his being accused by a somewhat censorious farmer, who lived quite near the church, of neglecting private and family worship in thus appearing so early at church. He went the length of bringing the matter before the Session, but after Mr Beaton listened to the accusation, he replied that John MacConnachie, who lived at such a distance from the church, was glorifying God, and doing his duty when walking to church as assuredly as his accuser was when praying in his arm-chair. That settled the matter.

A grandson of John Ross MacConnachie became minister of Rosskeen in 1813. He had been settled as minister of Logie in 1779, and at the advanced age of 70, and in very feeble health, was translated to Rosskeen. The people opposed his settlement. Two years before his death in 1826, the well-known Mr Carment became his helper and successor.

Walter Innes of Inverbreakie was another Rosskeen Worthy. It was one of his forbears, who suffered for non-conformity to "black prelacy" in 1662. The Inneses of Inverbreakie were large and influential proprietors in Easter Ross, the property of Culrossie being theirs also.

Notwithstanding Mr Beaton's great success in the ministry, he was by no means a stranger to doubts and fears regarding his own state, but had often sad misgivings of soul, "lest when he preached to others he himself should be a castaway." At one time when during the Sabbath night he had been much tempted with doubts about his personal salvation, he set off on Monday morning, he knew not whither, but when about the centre of the parish, he met the most eminent of his elders, Walter Innes, whom he saluted as follows:—"Walter, what do you think of a minister being sorely harrassed with doubts as to the salvation of his own soul?" The elder's prompt reply was:—"I don't wonder at that by any means: the wind is invariably strongest on the tallest tree in the wood." After a short space spent in meditation, the minister replied:—"O Walter, you have been the instrument of affording me relief of mind; come along with me to the Manse." ²⁹

Among the "honourable women" in the parish during Mr Beaton's incumbency was the proprietrix of Newmore, Mrs Munro, usually styled "Lady" Newmore. Her great-grand-mother was Lady Munro whose husband was Sir George Munro, to whom reference was made on a former page. Lady Munro was a very pious woman, and was usually spoken of as "the pious Lady Newmore." She is the "Lady Newmore" of the "Brodie Dairy." She was the sincere friend of the Covenanters and the "outed" ministers and a consistent opponent of Episcopacy. Her husband, Sir George Munro unlike his relative, Sir John Munro of Fowlis, was a supporter of the Government, and its policy. After the Revolution, Sir George became a Presbyterian, and an elder in the Rosskeen church. It is said that Dr Aird of Creich used to remark that very strange characters have found their way into eldership and that Sir George was one of them.

His great-grand-daughter, Mrs Munro, was a lady of high character, and eminent piety. She greatly enjoyed the society of Mr Beaton, and was one of

" those women which laboured in the Gospel " with him. In his endeavours to reform the morals, and improve the spiritual condition of his parishioners, Mr Beaton had a faithful coadjutor in Mrs Munro. We are informed in the " History of the Munros " that an ash tree, planted by Mrs Munro behind the Castle of Newmore still stands, and is known by the name of " Craobh-na-Baintighearna."

FAMILY CONNECTIONS AND DEATH.

The Rev. Daniel Beaton married as his first wife, Grizell, daughter of Mr Russell, chamberlain to Francis, Earl of Moray. They had a large family of sons and daughters. The sons all died young. It is stated incorrectly in the " Fasti " that a son Daniel was a preacher. According to " Religious Life in Ross," " one of his sons, Adrian Rose, became minister of Dingwall." Mr Beaton had no such son, but his daughter, Isobel, was married to the Rev. Adam Rose, minister of Dingwall. Their son, Daniel, succeeded his father as minister of Dingwall. Another daughter of Mr Daniel Beaton was married to the Rev. Thomas Whyte of Liberton, referred to already. Their son, who spent his boyhood with his grandfather in the Manse at Rosskeen, went as a medical man to India, where he amassed a fortune, which he bequeathed to the poor of the parish of Rosskeen, and to the poor of Lesmahagow.³⁰ The youngest daughter of the Rosskeen Manse married her cousin, John Bethune, second son of the minister of Croy. Mr Daniel Beaton married as his second wife, the widow of the Rev. Walter Ross of Kilmuir, as already stated.

Mr Beaton died at Newmore Castle, where he was a frequent visitor. His housekeeper was a Jane Munro, mother of Daniel Clark, the famous catechist of Fearn. Whenever the minister paid a visit to Newmore, " Lady " Newmore sent her carriage for him, and Jane would accompany him, faithfully attend to all his wants, and bring him safely home again. On the occasion of his last visit to Newmore Castle he

stayed over night, retiring in his usual state of health, and was found dead in bed next morning, 16th March, 1754. His remains were carried to the Manse by the Newmore tenants, amid signs of universal grief. He was buried in Rosskeen Churchyard.

On account of the shortness of his stature, Mr Beaton was generally spoken of as "Am Beutanach Beag." Dr Aird of Creich usually referred to him as "Domhnall Mor Beutanach." His ministry was one of life and power in Rosskeen. Among the "Fathers" of the Church in the Highlands, few, if any, were held in greater esteem than Mr Beaton of Rosskeen. The Beaton family Historian writes of him as follows:—"He possessed a most happy turn for composing any differences and animosities that happened in the neighbourhood. He was endowed with a singular and distinguished prudence, and a most circumspect walk and conversation; so that the character given by Buchanan to his kinsman, James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, 'vir summa prudens,' might have justly been applied to him. In short he was noted for piety, integrity, innocence, and every virtue that adorns the Christian life. On this account, his memory is most dear, not only to his friends and relations, and those of his own parish, but to all those that had the good fortune to be acquainted with him."

His nephew, and son-in-law, the Rev. John Bethune, M.A., D.D., F.R.S., succeeded Mr Beaton as minister of Rosskeen. He was a man of piety, but not strong physically. Having lost the power of walking, he had to be carried to Church, where he preached sitting. Among his assistants was the saintly Rev. John Graham of whom Dr Kennedy of Dingwall writes in his "Apostle of the North."

Dr Bethune was the Author of several books. He died in 1774, in the fiftieth year of his age, and the twentieth of his ministry.

THE END.

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D. M.

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NOTES.

1. At the time of the presentation, Dr Macqueen wrote, "The price of transcribing a copy was sixty cows. The copy possessed by Farquhar Beaton was of such value in his estimation, that when he trusted himself to a boat, in passing an arm of the sea to attend any patient at Dunvegan, he sent his servant by land, for the greater security with the *Lilium Medicinal*."
2. "An Historical and Genealogical Account of the Bethunes of the Island of Skye." (Reprint) MDCCCXCIII. p. 12.
3. Ibid do. p. 12.
4. Ibid do. p. 13.
5. "Side lights on Highland History." pp. 276, 277.
6. Tract on Revivals No. X. Supposed to have been written by Dr Alex. Beith, Glenelg, afterwards of Stirling.
7. "Eminent Divines in Aberdeen and the North." p. 176.
8. "Transactions of the Inverness Gaelic Society." Vol. XIX. p. 54.
9. Information supplied by Francis Grant, Esq., W.S., Register House, Edinburgh.
10. "Transactions of the Inverness Gaelic Society." Vol. XIX. p. 54.
11. Scott's "Fasti." Part v. p. 244.
12. Information supplied by Rev. A. J. Macdonald, Killearnan, from Records of Presbytery of Chanonry.
13. "Transactions of the Inverness Gaelic Society." Vol. XIX. p. 54.
14. Ibid.
15. Information supplied by Rev. A. J. Macdonald, Killearnan, from Records of Presbytery of Chanonry.
16. Ibid.
17. "The Northern Evangelist," March 1897. p. 7.
18. "Church Life in Ross and Sutherland, 1688-1914." pp. 95, 98.
19. "Memorabilia Domestica," 2nd Edition. p. 7.
20. Sinclair's Statistical Account. Parish of Rosskeen.
21. "Religious Life in Ross." pp. 185, 186.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Gillies's "Historical Collections." p. 455.
25. "Religious Life in Ross." p. 186.
26. Mackay's "Inverness and Dingwall Presbytery Records." Introduction p. xxi.
27. "Religious Life in Ross." p. 187.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. "The Northern Evangelist," April 1897. p. 4.
- "Religious Life in Ross." p. 180.

